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GENERAL

1. Ambassador Lodge comments on increasing world concern over nuclear radiation:

Ambassador Lodge warns that world-wide public anxiety over the effects of nuclear radiation on human life has increased considerably in recent weeks and that this trend will continue unless dealt with promptly.

He points out that the Bandung conference will almost certainly discuss this subject.


The ambassador also believes the subject may come up at: (1) the 23 May meeting of the UN Advisory Committee setting up the conference for the peaceful uses of atomic energy; (2) the UN Disarmament Commission meeting which is to follow the London disarmament talks and at which Menon is expected to advance again India's moratorium proposal; and (3) the conference on peaceful uses of atomic energy, scheduled for 8 August in Geneva, which Lodge fears will degenerate into a controversy over the effects of H-bomb tests.

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FAR EAST

3. Japan may submit peace proposal at Bandung based on UN Charter:

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 A Japanese Foreign Ministry official has revealed to the American embassy that the Japanese delegation to the Afro-Asian conference has been authorized to submit a "peace declaration," designed to take the place of the "five principles" of coexistence, if the situation called for it. The declaration would use the phraseology of the United Nations charter.

The basic Japanese position also calls for Japan to "serve as a bridge between East and West," to avoid conference consideration of problems among specific nations or development of an independent Afro-Asian bloc, and to emphasize a "broad global viewpoint." The ministry official stated, however, that Japan desired always to take the side of the free nations, and added that Japanese delegates were prepared to consult with those from Thailand, Turkey, Pakistan and the Philippines.

Comment: Political matters will be handled by Foreign Office adviser Masayuki Tani, an experienced diplomat who, like most of the government representatives at the conference, advocates close ties with the United States. Some members of the delegation from the Diet, however, may try to take a position at variance with the government, as indicated by the Left Socialist Party's announcement that its member of the delegation would propose an Asian economic conference to include Communist China.

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Japan looks upon the conference primarily as an opportunity to re-establish top-level contacts. The delegation will presumably be guided by recommendations of the Foreign Ministry working group to "refrain from taking a positive stand on delicate issues."

SOUTHEAST ASIA

4. Bao Dai directs Diem not to head Bandung delegation:

Bao Dai has directed Premier Diem not to carry out his recently announced plan to head the Vietnamese delegation to the Bandung conference "because Ho Chi Minh will not be going," according to a Vietnamese official.

the French government had asked Bao Dai to prevent Diem's attending the conference, since Diem's anti-French feeling would be fanned by the Arab delegates. Bao Dai himself explained his decision on the ground that Diem would be unable to take a strongly antiwhite position and would therefore be at a disadvantage with respect to the Viet Minh delegation.

Comment: The motivation of both Bao Dai and the French is probably partly to prevent Diem's increasing his own stature or diverting attention from the dispute with the Binh Xuyen.

5. Pathet Lao apparently to resume negotiations with royal government:

A Pathet Lao delegation numbering more than 30 persons arrived in Vientiane on 12 April unexpectedly, American minister Yost reports. Yost suspects that this volte-face, like the cancellation of Viet Minh foreign minister Pham Van Dong's visit, may have been the result of Dong's recent conversations with Nehru. Their arrival may also have been timed just to precede the departure of the Laotian delegation to Bandung.

The royal government meanwhile has transmitted its memorandum to the International Control Commission protesting Pathet Lao-Viet Minh violations of the Geneva accords and dealing with the re-establishment of royal authority in the northern provinces.

Comment: The course of the inconclusive conversations between royal government and Pathet Lao representatives has been marked by transparent Communist attempts to postpone any political settlement while they consolidated their hold in the north. Although the government's disillusion has grown, only recently has it decided to take a more vigorous line regarding the Pathet Lao.

Communist willingness to resume negotiations at this time appears to be another device to capitalize on Premier Katay's vacillating nature and perhaps thereby to soften any statements he might have planned to make at Bandung regarding Communist intransigence and violations of the truce.

LATE ITEM

6. Bulganin stresses future depends on Soviet-American relations:

In his conversation with Ambassador Bohlen at the Soviet reception for the Austrian leaders on 12 April, Premier Bulganin disagreed with Bohlen's suggestion that the situation in the Far East was the most dangerous in the world today. He said that the absence of any "common language" between the US and the USSR was the most basic and important difficulty. At the same time, in conversation with the British ambassador, other presidium members were developing the thesis that Anglo-Soviet relations would be easily improved were it not for the attitude of the United States.

Bulganin told Bohlen that the Soviet student editors would not "go along" with United States visa requirements --such as fingerprinting--which he described as "savage" and incompatible with human dignity. Bulganin appeared convinced that, "if President Eisenhower were aware of the circumstances of this case," the US executive branch could waive any requirement of law.

Bohlen comments that this clearly reflects one of the real obstacles in dealing with the Soviet dictatorship, the inability of Soviet leaders to understand the operation of a government by law.

Bohlen informed Bulganin that he was planning a visit to the 'new lands' area and would be accompanied on his trip by the embassy's agricultural expert. Bulganin asked if the embassy really had someone competent in agricultural affairs, and, in response to an affirmative answer, said "we could use him in the Ministry of Agriculture." Bohlen reports that Bulganin showed great interest and appeared surprised when informed that conditions in the 'new lands' paralleled those which once obtained in the dustbowl areas of the United States.

Bohlen came away with an impression of a great degree of uncertainty, even concern, in the Soviet government at the general international situation. Bohlen reaffirms his previously reported view that the present leadership, because of its collective aspect, does not operate with Stalin's precision and certainty when confronted with major problems.

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